

200 try for new judicial position

By LINDA CHOY

ABOUT 200 people have applied for the new post of judiciary administrator, with more than half of the applications from Britain.

By the close of applications on September 17, only 84 had applied from Hong Kong for the job which would carry a monthly salary of more than \$130,000.

The appointee will be awarded a three-year contract to help to promote what Governor Chris Patten has called a "service-oriented culture" within the judicial system.

The senior administrator post is equivalent to a D8 rank on the directorate pay scale with a monthly salary of \$130,650 plus fringe benefits, and education and housing allowances.

Mr Patten announced in his second policy speech that the appointment would be made by the end of this year to assist the judiciary in its attempt to increase efficiency.

The appointee will sit on a working party to identify problems in the judicial system and devise solutions.

Chaired by the Chief justice, Sir Ti Liang Yang, the party comprises members of the judiciary, the legal profession and the public.

Sir Ti Liang will also chair a selection committee, with details of the selection procedures to be announced on Monday.

The requirements listed in an advertisement for the job stated the candidates - degree-holders or equivalent

- should have managerial skills, good inter-personal communication, and the ability to plan and provide strategic vision in management of resources.

A legal qualification was not essential, although qualifications and experience in the field would be an advantage.

Despite the recent stalemate in relations between the Government and its 190,000-strong civil service, the Government was urged not to give too much weight to the issue of nationality in the selection process.

The legal profession's Legislative Council representative, Simon Ip Sik-on, said candidates' proven administration record was more important than their legal background, because the judiciary already had the legal talents.

However, he said the appointee should have some knowledge of the legal system.

He also did not consider it essential for the appointee to be a local person, because English was still the language most used in Hong Kong's judicial system.

The United Democrats' spokesman on legal affairs, James To Kun-sun, said the Government should attach top priority to the candidate's ability in managing large-scale operations.

"Of course it would be ideal if the same person also possesses good knowledge of the legal system so he or she could master the review and reform more efficiently."